

## **COMMANDING OFFICER'S STATEMENT ON SAFETY**



Safety is central to the idea of readiness and must not be an afterthought in combat, in training, or on liberty. As a Light Attack Squadron, we assume even greater risks. Aviation is an inherently dangerous and unforgiving business. We as Warriors must guard against reckless behavior at both the squadron and individual level because it jeopardizes the health, safety and combat readiness of our unit.

**On Duty:** Warriors make the time to do things right the first time. We stay focused on our mission and take care of each other. At times, the mundane day-to-day business of fixing and flying becomes distracting. Make sure that we are following procedures, anticipating mishaps/incidents before they happen and intervening when we see an unsafe situation developing. Remain consistent and unrelenting. Operational excellence is a daily battle, and the enemies are subtle and lethal; lethargy, complacency, anxiety, over zealousness, forgetfulness and assumption to name a few. Stay on target. Your training and discipline will pay off when the Warriors are called to fly and fight.

**Off Duty:** In recent years, off duty safety incidents have had an increasingly negative effect on unit morale and readiness. The misuse and abuse of alcohol remains the number one contributor to unsafe acts and activities away from the workplace. This follows closely with accidents involving motorcycles. Marines who develop a leave/liberty plan, and then execute according to that plan, rarely find themselves in harm's way. Marines who fail to plan and execute on a whim, regularly find themselves in a bad situation, or worse yet, in the hospital or morgue. Be familiar with the leave and liberty plans of the Warriors in your charge.

### **Expectations of all Warriors:**

- ✓ Professional Maintainers, Professional Aviators, Professional Administrators, Professional Aircrew.
- ✓ Seek improvement in everything you do.
- ✓ Managing risk requires the commitment of all personnel to be successful.
- ✓ Foster a preventative climate.
- ✓ Every Marine and Sailor is empowered to stop an unsafe act.
- ✓ Identify hazards and take action to correct them.
- ✓ Halt any event if injury to personnel or damage to equipment may result. Trust your instincts.
- ✓ Question everything. Aggressively challenge the actions of others if unsafe conditions become apparent.
- ✓ Safety MUST NOT and WILL NOT sacrifice for expediency or convenience.
- ✓ Be accountable for your actions.

**Have Guns, Will Travel.....**

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL JEREMIE N. HESTER  
COMMANDING OFFICER, MARINE LIGHT ATTACK HELICOPTER SQUADRON 167**